In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended): A method for protecting a memory space from external access, the memory space having a plurality of logical portions, comprising the steps of:

storing in a location in the memory space on one of the logical portions thereof a plurality of lock bits, each of the lock bits associated with a separate one of the logical portions

5   of the memory space, including the logical portions in which the lock bits are ~~shared~~ <u>stored</u>, and determinative as to the access thereof for a predetermined memory access operation thereon, there being at least two different memory access operations;

detecting a request for access to a desired location<u> in</u> one of the logical portions in the memory space for operating thereon;

10   comparing the requested predetermined memory access operation with the ~~associated~~ <u>one of the</u> lock ~~bit in the~~ <u>bits</u> associated <u>with the one of the</u> logical portion<u>s to which the request for access is directed</u> and determining if access is allowed <u>thereto</u> for the requested predetermined memory access operation of the at least two different memory access operations; and

15   if allowed, performing the requested predetermined memory access operation of the at least two different memory access operations on the desired location in the memory space.

2. (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is a read of an addressable location in the associated logical portion.

3. (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is a write of an addressable location in the associated logical portion.

4. (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is an erase of the associated logical portion for an addressable location therein.

5.   (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of storing in a location the plurality of lock bits comprises storing in a variable location in the memory space the plurality of lock bits and storing the location of the lock bits in a known location in the memory space, such that in the step of comparing, the location of the lock bits is first read from the known location in the memory space and then this read location is utilized to read the lock bits from the memory space.

6.   (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is an erase of the lock bits.

7.   (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 6, wherein the predetermined memory access operation of erasing the lock bits requires that each of the lower logical portions of the memory space, relative to the variable location, having a relatively lower logical memory address and not containing lock bits be erased before a top most portion of memory space having a relatively higher logical address than the lower logical portions is erased, which top most portion of the memory space contains the lock bits.

8.   (Currently Amended): A method for protecting a memory space from external access, the memory having a plurality of logical portions, comprising the steps of:

storing in a location in the memory space on one of the logical portions thereof a plurality of lock bits, each of the lock bits associated with a separate one of the logical portions of the memory space, including the logical portion in which the lock bits are stored, and determinative as to the access thereof for a predetermined memory access operation thereon, ~~there being at least two different memory access operations~~;

detecting a request for access to a desired location <u>in</u> one of the logical portions in the memory space for operating thereon;

comparing the requested predetermined memory access operation with the ~~associated~~ <u>with the one of the</u> lock ~~bit in the~~ <u>bits</u> associated <u>with the one of the</u> logical portion<u>s to which the request for access is directed</u> and determining if access is allowed<u> thereto</u> for the

requested predetermined memory access operation ~~of the at least two different memory access operations~~; and

15   if allowed, performing the requested predetermined memory access operation ~~of the at least two different memory access operations~~ on the desired location in the memory space.

9.   (Previously Presented):   The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is a read of an addressable location in the associated logical portion.

10.   (Previously Presented):   The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is a write of an addressable location in the associated logical portion.

11.   (Previously Presented):   The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is an erase of the associated logical portion for an addressable location therein.

12.   (Previously Presented):   The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of storing in a location the plurality of lock bits comprises storing in a variable location in the memory space the plurality of lock bits and storing the location of the lock bits in a known location in the memory space, such that in the step of comparing, the location of the lock bits is first read from

5   the known location in the memory space and then this read location is utilized to read the lock bits from the memory space.

13.   (Previously Presented):   The method of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined memory access operation is an erase of the lock bits.

14.   (Previously Presented):   The method of Claim 6, wherein the predetermined memory access operation of erasing the lock bits requires that each of the lower logical portions of the memory space relative to the variable location having a relatively lower logical memory address and not containing lock bits be erased before a top most portion of memory space having

a relatively higher logical address than the lower logical portions is erased, which top most portion of the memory space contains the lock bits.

15.   (New): The method of Claim 1, wherein all of the lock bits are stored in a single one of the logical portions.

15.   (New): The method of Claim 1, wherein all of the lock bits are stored in a single one of the logical portions.

16.   (New): The method of Claim 8, wherein all of the lock bits are stored in a single one of the logical portions.